

HOME READING.

THE COAST-GUARD.

Do you wonder what I am seeing,
In the heart of the fire, aglow
Like cliffs in a golden sunset,
With a summer sea below?
I see, away to the eastward,
The line of a storm-beat coast,
And I hear the tread of the hurrying waves,
Like the tramp of a mailed host.

And up and down in the darkness,
And over the frozen sand,
I hear the men of the coast-guard
Pacing along the strand.
Beaten by storm and tempest,
And drenched by the pelting rain,
From the shores of Carolina,
To the wind-swept bays of Maine.

No matter what storms are raging,
No matter how wild the night,
The gleam of their swinging lanterns
Shines out with a friendly light.
And many a shipwrecked sailor
Thanks God with his gasping breath,
For the sturdy arms of the surfmen
That drew him away from death.

And so, when the wind is wailing,
And the air grows dim with sleet,
I think of the fearless watchers
Pacing along their beat.
I think of a wreck, fast breaking
In the surf of a rocky shore,
And the life-boat leaping onward
To the stroke of the bending oar.

I hear the shouts of the sailors,
The boom of the frozen sail,
And the creak of the icy halyards
Straining against the gale.
"Courage!" the Captain trumpets,
"They are sending help from land!"
God bless the men of the coast-guard,
And hold their lives in his hand!

—St. Nicholas for March.

The Cost of Strong Drink.

Mr. John V. Foster, in his address at the opening of the Woman's Temperance Union, spoke as follows:

The drink bill of the country exceeds the cost of any other article of domestic consumption. In 1883 (ending June 30th) the government received in internal revenue as taxes on distilled spirits \$74,988,775, a sum which at 90 cents a gallon represents 82,631,972 gallons. This quantity of liquor was chiefly composed of whiskey and brandy. The price of whiskey as sold at the saloons is 15 cents for each glass of half a gill, or \$9.60 a gallon. The price of brandy is 25 cents a glass, or \$16 a gallon. At the drug store the best brandy retails at least at \$12 a gallon, and the best whiskey at \$5. Thus it appears that the cost of this quantity of \$200,000 of gallons to the consumer would be at least \$6 per gallon, and the total sum thus expended would aggregate \$1,200,000.

In 1883 the Government received for taxes on fermented liquors, \$16,900,615, which at the rate of duty of \$1 a barrel, represents 16,900,615 barrels. Each barrel contains at least thirty gallons. No less, therefore, than \$33,819,065 gallons of fermented liquors form the annual consumption in the United States. Each gallon contains a dozen glasses, and a glass is seldom or never sold at less than five cents, and is sometimes sold at double this price. On this basis, therefore, \$814,561,489 were thus expended in the year.

To sum up, then, excluding all imported liquors and all native wines, and allowing that the amount of spirits that escapes taxation is equal to the amount used in mechanical and scientific pursuits, it is made evident that the annual drink bill of the United States is equal to \$1,200,000.

The relative size of this expenditure becomes strikingly manifest by reference to some other expenditures. In 1880 the total product of all the "flour and grist mills" of the country, according to the census, was \$505,000,000. The value of all the wooden goods, including nearly every article in the manufacture of which wood was used, was \$237,000,000. The value of all the cotton goods was \$100,000,000, of boots and shoes, \$106,000,000, of sugar and molasses, \$55,000,000. The drink bill of nation, then, equals its expenditure for all cotton and woollen goods manufactured, for all boots and shoes worn, and for all sugar and molasses consumed. The annual drink bill exceeds by \$300,000,000 the annual bread bill.

In 1881 the States and Territories spent for public education \$55,000,000. The churches of all denominations devoted to their support about \$60,000,000. The missionary societies of the country and Europe expended a little over \$6,000,000. The sum wasted in rum every year would give a homestead to every pauper in the land. It would pay all the expenses of the Government, support all our churches, pay the costs of all our schools, and leave over \$300,000,000 for hospitals, academies of art, free libraries, and other institutions of beneficence.

A Long Sleep.

A certain famous historical desert snail was brought from Egypt to England as a conchological specimen in the year 1846. This particular mollusk (the only one of his race, probably, who ever attained to individual distinction) at the time of his arrival in London was really alive and vigorous, but as the authorities of the British Museum, to whose tender care he was consigned, were ignorant of this important fact in his economy, he was examined, month downward, on to a piece of card-board, and duly labelled and dated with scientific accuracy. "Helix desertorum, March 25, 1846." Being a snail of a retiring and contented disposition, however, accustomed to long droughts and corresponding naps in his native sand wastes, our mollusk thereupon simply curled himself up into the tightest possible ball, and, with a contented expression on his face, went peacefully to sleep in his card-board coffin for an unlimited period. Every conchologist takes it for granted, of course, that the shells which he receives from foreign parts have had their inhabitants properly boiled and extracted before being exported; for it is only the mere outer shell or skeleton of the animal that we preserve in our cabinets, leaving the actual flesh and muscles of the creature himself to wither and mummify upon its native shores. At the British Museum the desert snail might have snored away his inglorious existence unsuspected, but for a happy accident which attracted public attention to his remarkable case in a most extraordinary manner. On March 7, 1850, nearly four years later, it was casually observed that the card on which he was housed was slightly discolored; and this discovery led to the suspicion that perhaps a living animal might be temporarily inured with

in that papery tomb. The museum authorities accordingly ordered our friend a warm bath (who shall say hereafter that science is unfeeling?) upon which the grateful snail, waking up at the touch of the familiar moisture, put his head cautiously over the edge of his shell, walked up to the top of the basin, and began to take a cursory survey of the British institution with his four eye-bearing tentacles. So strange a recovery from a long torpid condition, only equalled by that of the seven sleepers of Ephesus, deserved an exceptional amount of scientific recognition. The desert snail set once awake and found himself famous. Nay, he actually sat for his portrait to an eminent zoological artist, Mr. Waterhouse, and a woodcut from the sketch thus produced, with a history of his life and adventures, may be found even unto this day in Dr. Woodward's "Manual of the Mollusca," to witness if it lie.—*The Cornhill Magazine.*

Hooks and Eyes.

For more than a dozen years the manufacture of hooks and eyes for women's and children's dresses has been said to have been dead, buttons having superseded them. But there are indications that hooks and eyes are again to come into use, at least to a considerable extent. If this should prove to be the case, it will gladden the hearts of some who have preserved their machinery from the scrap heap. Thirty years ago the State of Connecticut had manufactories within her territory that produced these little articles to the value of \$112,000 annually at fifteen cents a gross. Previous to 1830, or thereabout, hooks and eyes were made by hand and sold at \$1.50 per gross.

The machines for making hooks and eyes are quite ingenious, those for the hooks being capable of making ninety per minute, and those for the eyes one hundred and twenty per minute. That for making the hooks takes the wire from a reel through a straightener, cuts off the wire to the exact length, when a blade strikes the piece in the middle of its length, and two side blades moving simultaneously bend the wire double, laying the two halves of its length close together and parallel. Then two pins rise, one on each side of the ends of the wire, to form the eyes of the hook, and two semi rotating pushers bend the ends round the pins, making the eyes for sewing the hook on to the fabric. The unfastened hook is still perfectly flat, when a horizontal pin and a vertical bender working upward curve the double end of the hook, and a presser flattens the end to a "swan bill." The eye is formed in another machine, but by means of similar appliances. Brass wire is used for silvered hooks and eyes, and an iron wire for the back or japanned goods. The silver coating is made by mixing an acid precipitate of silver with common salt and the cream of tartar of commerce to produce a paste. Certain proportions of this paste and of the brass hooks and eyes are placed in a tumbling barrel, and by attrition and affinity of brass and silver unite. The articles, as they come from the tumbling barrel, are of a lustrous white, but are polished by being placed in cotton cloth bags with bar soap and rubbed with hot water under the vibrating arm of a washing-machine.

The Plain Truth About Congress.

The fault is not so much with the committees as with the Congress as a whole. No Congress has ever given itself up more entirely to president-making than has this one. The business interests are considered only to the extent that they are supposed to be of service in a political convention, or to the extent that their hostility may be feared. The business men do not organize in a manner to make their power felt. It perhaps would not be too rash to say that a body of professional labor agitators, who could talk glibly of the "wrongs of labor," would receive quite as much consideration at this juncture, and as readily obtain a hearing from congressional committees as the representatives of the leading business interests. It probably is a fact that arguments as such before congressional committees are of comparatively little importance. The opinions of congressmen are generally formed upon the most important questions before the bills are taken up in the committees. They are already "pledged" or "committed" before they are familiar with the details or importance or merits of many questions. These commitments are made at the primaries and in the nominating conventions. A striking instance of the contempt with which suggestions from business men are received was furnished this week by the House Committee on Coinage, which, the day after the arguments of delegations of chambers of commerce upon the silver question had been made, and before those arguments had been printed, voted to refuse to report a provision to suspend the coinage of the silver dollar. The majority of the committee was composed of radical "silver" men, whose opinions were unalterably fixed, who regarded the arguments of the "business men" as an assault of capital upon the "people's dollar," and who gave the hearing because it might please the business men, and would not hurt the cause. The most efficient arguments of business men in favor of the commercial and financial policies will be made in the several congressional districts and at the polls. If the business interest as a body can make themselves as much felt or feared as, say the temperance people, their interests will be more efficiently represented in Congress.—*Broadstreet's.*

From the Cradle to the Grave.

The vital statistics of New Jersey for 1883, in the report issued by the State Board of Health, shows 9,166 marriages, 24,430 births, and 23,310 deaths. Of the deaths there were under one year, 5,378; from one to five years, 3,413; from five to twenty years, 2,388; from twenty to sixty years, 7,060; and over sixty years, 4,827. The population of the State in 1880 was 1,131,117, which gives an average death rate of 20.60. In different localities it varies widely. It is 26.38 in Hudson County; 24.82 in Passaic; 23.13 in Essex; 21.37 in Union; and only 13.38 in Sussex; and 13.41 in Cape May. The largest death rate is shown in the cities, that of Newark being 25.48; Jersey City, 25.74; Orange, 21.80; Hoboken, 25.90; Trenton, 20.79; Paterson, 27.72; Passaic, 20.82; Morristown, 28.96; New Brunswick, 26.79; Camden, 20.01; Gloucester, 21.88; Burlington, 18.51; Atlantic City, 26.39; Elizabeth, 24.30. Nine hundred and seven deaths were due to accidents, of which 247 occurred in Hudson County. The largest populated counties—Essex and Hudson—show some singular comparisons. Essex, with the larger population, had 4,394 deaths, against 4,996 in Hudson, where the deaths from consumption, lung and diarrhoeal diseases were greater. There were also a greater number of marriages in Essex, while the comparison of births is remarkable, Essex having

5,342 births and Hudson only 3,296. The deaths from disease show a large preponderance of consumption and lung troubles over diarrhoeal diseases. Brain, spinal and nervous diseases coming next in order, there being 461 deaths from that cause.

The following table, by counties, shows the number of marriages, births and deaths:

Counties.	Marriages.	Births.	Deaths.
Atlantic	158	362	361
Bergen	173	676	642
Burlington	386	1,021	830
Camden	572	1,234	1,291
Cape May	52	215	131
Cumberland	313	903	550
Essex	1,662	5,242	4,394
Gloucester	165	610	407
Hudson	1,578	3,296	4,996
Hunterdon	261	629	549
Mercer	502	1,168	1,188
Middlesex	420	1,195	1,085
Monmouth	501	1,174	1,088
Morris	341	1,013	977
Ocean	107	294	203
Passaic	721	2,073	1,079
Saline	153	426	416
Somerset	168	467	449
Sussex	198	249	315
Union	417	1,368	1,188
Warren	307	822	571
Total	9,166	24,430	23,310

THE man who for forty years served as the leader of the clique at the Grand Opera in Paris has just died. Levy David Cert was his name, but his familiar title was Le Pere David. He was born on the day of Marie Antoinette's execution (1793); was present at the battles of Lutten and Leipzig; was a St. Helena medalist, and retired from the Opera on the accession of Vaucorbell, the present manager. Figaro relates the method of procedure by this clique of the Romans (as Berlioz calls the clique), as follows: "Seated in the front row of the pit, having a part of his forces around him, while the others were placed in the second gallery, he directed from his seat, by his stick, the intensity and the duration of the applause. A short, sharp rap on the floor meant that the clique was to confine itself to a moderate clapping of the hands; but when he gave a rapid and prolonged movement of rotation to his stick, his followers knew that they were to indulge in an outburst of enthusiasm, recall the actor on the stage, and give him an 'ovation.'" All this was thoroughly rehearsed. Attempts were made by managers at various times to do away with the services of Father David and his children, but the opposition of the singers prevented the extinction of the system. The services of the clique were of too much value to the performers to be entirely dispensed with. If the stories told are true, the leader of the clique was often paid to kill by a negative process one performer that was in the way of another. He would refrain altogether from ordering applause, or would command it very sparingly, according as appeared to him wise. It is told, too, that persons of good standing in society often served in the employ of the father, and in some cases were known to pay for the privilege in order to be in the house on some particular occasion. But, on the whole, these genteel assistants were not to the father's liking, who found by experience that they were too apt to express their feelings without waiting for the signal, and would even sometimes refrain altogether from applauding at the word of command; and such doings being subversive of discipline, it was difficult for other than tried men to enlist in the ranks of the father. To one *chef de clique*, whom he calls Auguste (it might have been David), Berlioz attributes this saying: "So long as the public are admitted to operas on first nights, the Opera is lost."—*Boston Transcript.*

List of Letters.

Remaining unclaimed in the Post Office at Bloomfield, N. J., on Wednesday, April 23d, 1884.

Bagestron, Eric	Gallagher, James
Buech, Wm.	Hathaway, Mr.
Cain, Mrs. Annie	Harrington, Annie
Crane, Geneva	Hampson, Geo.
Dickerson, D. M.	Leite, Chas.
Dorsey, Mrs. Rebecca	Seward, C. L.
Draper, Mr. & Mrs.	Seward, G. F.
Flanagan, Patrick	Sherman, T. D.
Foster, Wm. (2)	Stockbridge, Mrs. V.
Gahon, Tresa	Warnach, Richard
Garrabrant, Mrs. C. Weller	Jennie

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